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**To:** Microsoft ATR  
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**Subject:** Microsoft settlement

If I understand the Microsoft antitrust case correctly, Microsoft was found guilty of breaking the law by using its monopoly position as the operating system on the computer to undercut Netscape and drive them basically out of business (i.e. they were bought by AOL). They achieved this by bundling their software/browser with the operating system and offering it for free where Netscape charged for theirs (i.e. to make themselves a viable company).

Since Netscape didn't have an operating system of their own, this gave them NO chance to compete with Microsoft. Since the courts unanimously found Microsoft guilty of breaking the law on this issue - shouldn't Netscape shareholders have the right to sue Microsoft for financial losses as well as punitive damages? Who knows how Netscape would have done if Microsoft had been forced to only challenge them on their own turf. When a company (Microsoft) can toss in other goodies where they have total control to squash competition, then that does violate the Sherman antitrust act in my opinion and that company should be made to pay the appropriate penalty. In my opinion Microsoft has not. They got a slap on the wrist from a pro-business Justice Department and are already engaging in the same behaviour again with Microsoft XP. This was a case in which the courts found UNANIMOUSLY - TWICE - that Microsoft was guilty. It is my opinion that this administration is so concerned about the economy and their inability to do something about correcting the downturn (especially after Sept. 11), that they would just as soon this case go away. In this economic uncertainty the federal government caved in on a case the courts had them winning. IT SETS AN EXTREMELY DANGEROUS PRECEDENT FOR THE FUTURE! It sends the signal that if your pockets are deep enough you can buy your way out of anything - INCLUDING BREAKING THE LAW and INCLUDING DRIVING COMPETITORS OUT OF BUSINESS. Is this the message this government wants to send? Because in my opinion this is the message this justice department did send in their settlement with Microsoft - AND THEY SHOULD BE ASHAMED!